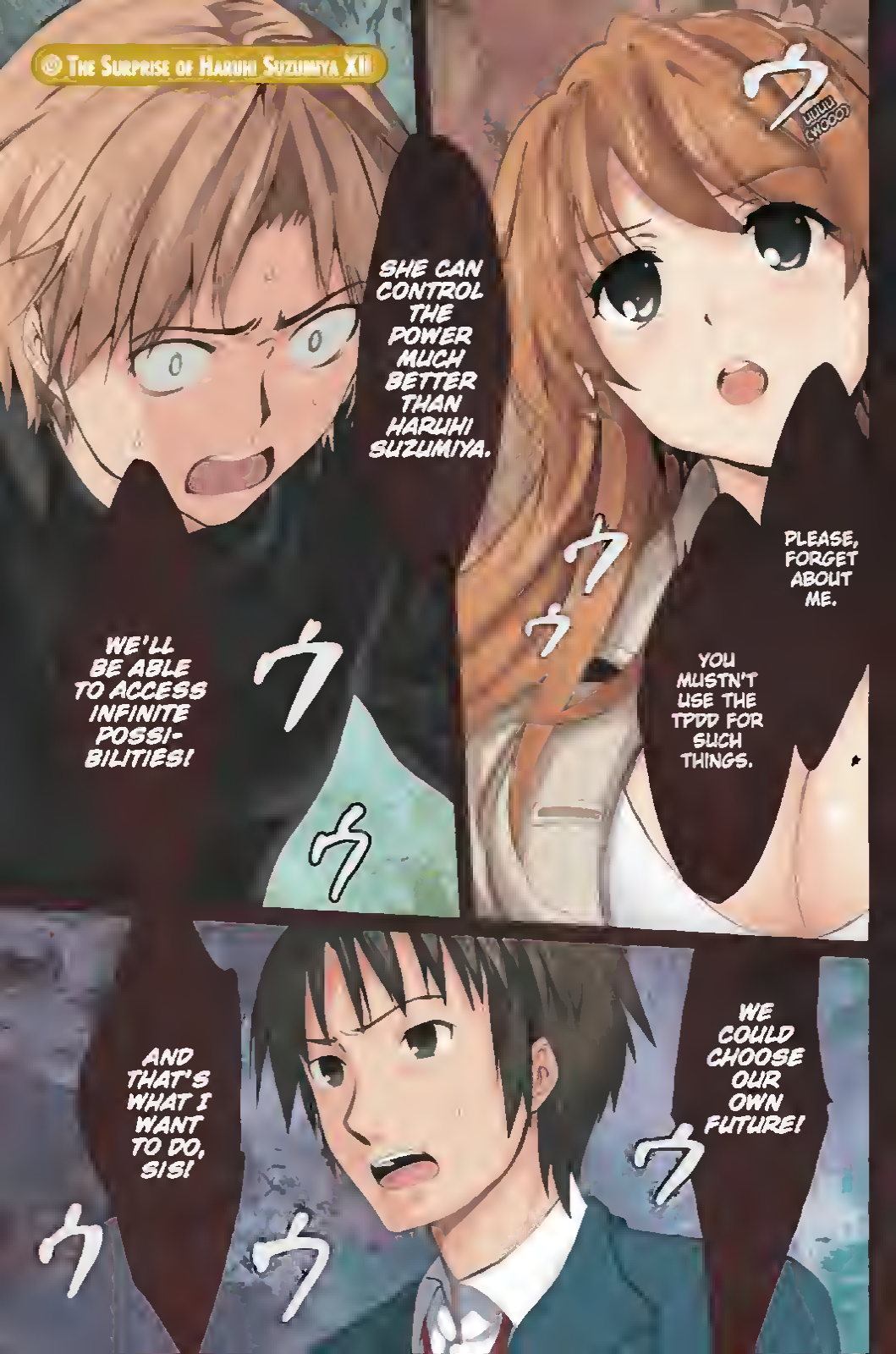
ART BY GAKU TSUGANO
STORY BY NAGARU TANIGAWA
CHARACTERS BY: NOIZI ITO


SHE CAN CONTROL THE POWER MUCH BETTER THAN HARUHI SUZUMIYA.
WE'LL BE ABLE TO ACCESS INFINITE POSSI-BILITIES!
PLEASE, FORGET ABOUT ME.
YOU MUSTN'T USE THE TPDD FOR SUCH THINGS.
WE COULD CHOOSE OUR OWN FUTURE!
AND THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO DO, SIS!

20
THE MELANCHOLY OF
HARUHI SUZUMIYA
ORIGINAL STORY
NAGARU TANIGAWA
ILLUSTRATION
GAKU TSUGANO
CHARACTER DESIGN:
NOIZI ITO

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I DON'T CARE WHAT HAP-PENS TO THE WORLD.
SIS, I JUST...
...I CAN'T LET MYSELF LOSE YOU AGAIN!
THE PERSON NATIVE TO YOUR TIMELINE IS NOT ME.
I DO NOT HAVE A YOUNGER BROTHER.
IT'S THE SAME THING.
THE FACT THAT YOU WERE LOST IN MY TIMELINE...
...MEANS THAT AT THE INTER-SECTION POINT IN THE FUTURE, YOU'LL...
THE FUTURE CAN BE CHANGED.
TRYING TO PREVENT THAT...

YOUR FUTURE IS THE PAST TO SOMEONE BEYOND IT.
FIXED REALITY MUST REMAIN UNCHANGED...
LIKE HELL IT CAN!
...WE ALREADY CAN'T TRAVEL BACK ANY FURTHER THAN FOUR YEARS AGO!
BUT...
THAT'S WHY WE EXIST.
SO WE SHOULD JUST DO IT HERE.
THERE'S ALWAYS A RUPTURE, ALWAYS...
THERE'S NO OPPORTUNITY TO CORRECT THE TIME PLANE.
BA (WHF)

I CAN'T ALLOW THAT.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
I UNDERSTAND BETTER THAN ANYONE!
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES...
...WHO HAVE COME TO ADJUST THE TIME PLANE!
THAT'S RIGHT.
THE TPDD!
IT'S OFTEN CALLED A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD.
TIME TRAVEL USING THE TPDD IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE NORMAL ORDER OF THE TIME PLANE.
BUT THAT SAME TRAVEL DAMAGES THE PLANE ITSELF.
REPAIRING THE HOLES IN TIME THE TPDD CAUSED WAS NOT SIMPLE.

SO WHY ARE YOU HERE?

BUT WHILE I WAS PURSUING THIS, I DISCOVERED OTHER PHENOMENA.
WE CANNOT CHANGE THE PAST... NOR THE FUTURE.

FOR THIS, RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW.

TIME IS CONSTRUCTED OF INNUMERABLE INSTANTS LIKE THIS ONE.
WE NEED ONLY BRING THE MATERIAL OF THE PRESENT INTO THE FUTURE TO CONTINUE TO CHANGE IT.
REPAIRING DISLOCATIONS IN THE TIME PLANE AS THEY HAPPEN!

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH ENERGY IS REQUIRED TO DESTROY FIXED EVENTS?
IT CAN BE DONE!
IF I USE HARUHI SUZUMIYA'S POWER...
I'LL REWRITE ALL OF SPACE-TIME...
...FROM THIS TIME PLANE ON INTO THE FUTURE.
I DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO HISTORY ALONG THE WAY.
WE'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT ONCE WE'VE FIXED SPACE-TIME TO OUR FUTURE.
HARUHI SUZUMIYA'S BEEN DOING THAT ALL ALONG, ANYWAY!
SINCE LONG BEFORE WE EVER ARRIVED HERE!

I SUPPOSE THIS ISN'T ACTUALLY THE FIRST TIME WE'VE MET, THOUGH.
...BUT I'M SO PLEASED TO FINALLY MEET YOU.
SORRY TO INTERRUPT THE ARGUMENT...
KO (TUP)
YOU'RE... YOU'RE COMMITTING WHAT IS A SERIOUS CRIME IN YOUR TIMELINE.
BA (WHIP)
THIS IS AN UNFORGIVABLE CRIME!

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, ASAHINA-SAN?
BUT FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE, YOU MAY NOT HAVE SEEN ME IN QUITE SOME TIME.

THERE ARE THINGS THAT EVEN I AM PROHIBITED FROM DOING.
YOU'RE A HIGHLY DANGEROUS PERSON.
BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING.
...THAT'S PROBABLY TRUE.

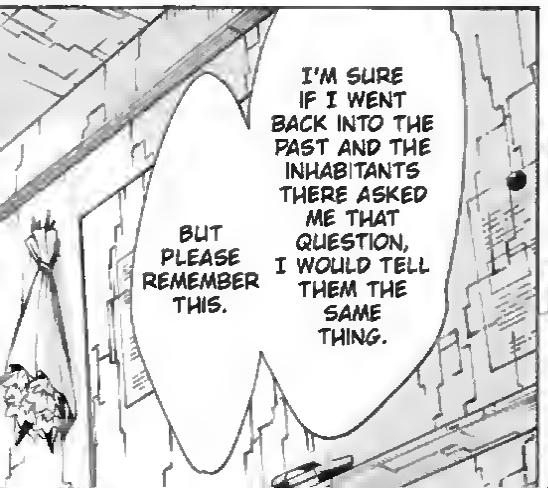
YOU'RE SIMPLY TOO CLEVER.
ONE CARELESS WORD FROM ME COULD BECOME TEN WORDS' WORTH OF INFORMATION FOR YOU.
I'D LOVE TO REMINISCE WITH YOU, THOUGH.
TRUTH-FULLY.
I UNDER-STAND.
THOSE WORDS ALONE ARE ENOUGH.

YOU'VE TOLD ME WHAT I AM...
...AND HOW I'M VIEWED IN THE FUTURE.
EVEN IF THAT WAS FAKE, IT AMOUNTS TO THE SAME THING.
I'LL DO MY OWN INFOR-MATION ANALYSIS.
ABOVE ALL...
...THANKS TO YOU COMING HERE, I'VE UNDERSTOOD WHAT IT IS I NEED TO DO.
THE FACT THAT YOU APPEARED IN FRONT OF ME IS EXTRAOR-DINARY.

WHICH MEANS I WILL HAVE TO FACE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY MYSELF.
YOU MUST NEED MY POWER FOR WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT.
NO, NOT JUST MINE.
YOU REQUIRE SUZUMIYA-SAN'S POWER AS WELL.
AM I WRONG?
I'VE ALWAYS FELT THIS WAY, BUT...
...KOIZUMI, OUT OF ALL THE STC DATA, YOU TRULY ARE AN IRREPLACEABLE INDIVIDUAL.
THAT'S WHY YOU WERE INVITED INTO THE SOS BRIGADE... CHOSEN BY SUZUMIYA-SAN.
ASKING QUESTIONS YOU ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER TO IS A BAD HABIT.

I'VE BECOME AWARE OF THAT.
THOUGH AT FIRST, I ONLY HALF-BELIEVED IT.
I AM PART OF THE SOS BRIGADE.
AS IS NAGATO-SAN, AND THE YOUNGER ASAHINA-SAN.
SO WHAT OF YOU?
FOR WHAT PURPOSE HAVE YOU RE-TURNED TO INTER-FERE WITH YOUR PAST SELF?

I WOULD MERELY...
...BE UN-SURPRISED.


I'M SURE IF I WENT BACK INTO THE PAST AND THE INHABITANTS THERE ASKED ME THAT QUESTION, I WOULD TELL THEM THE SAME THING.
BUT PLEASE REMEMBER THIS.

WHAT IF I SAID THAT WAS... CLASSIFIED INFORMATION?

I WOULD ASK YOU NOT TO UNDER-ESTIMATE THE HUMANS OF THE PAST.
I WON'T GO SO FAR AS TO SAY THIS APPLIES TO ALL HUMANITY...
WE ARE NOT SO VERY FOOLISH, YOU SEE
THANKS TO ALL THE COMMOTION THAT THE VARIOUS ALIENS HAVE CAUSED, YOU SEE.
LITTLE BY LITTLE, I'VE COME TO UNDERSTAND THIS.
...BUT HUMANS WHO ARE CONCERNED WITH THE FUTURE CERTAINLY DO EXIST.

WELL...
AM I WRONG?
IT'S NOT THAT IT WEAKENS WITH USE...
...BUT SHE WON'T HAVE IT FOREVER.
SUZUMIYA'S ABILITY IS NOT PERMANENT, IS IT?
YOUR PRETENTIOUS NONSENSE MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE!
SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
KU-YOH— DO IT!
HE'S TOTALLY LOST IT!?
HE'S —!
HAH... NO MATTER HOW MANY WORDS I WASTE, THESE FOOLS WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND.
I WAS SUCH AN IDIOT.
I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS FROM THE START!

KILL HARUHI SUZUMIYA.
CARRY OUT OUR AGREE-MENT.
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND? I'LL PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, THEN.
BRING HER BIOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS TO AN END!
YOU SAID YOU COULD DO IT.

A VESSEL— THAT'S RIGHT.
HARUHI'S POWERS COULD BE STOLEN. EVEN NAGATO HAS DONE IT BEFORE.
A CONTAINER...
AND THE ONE CLOSEST TO HARUHI RIGHT NOW IS...
THAT MEANS HARUHI'S POWERS COULD BE GIVEN TO ANYONE.
SASAKI.
IS IT POSSIBLE THAT SHE'S BEING CONTROLLED BY WHAT THEY'RE SAYING...?
THEY MIGHT BRAINWASH HER, OR DEPROGRAM HER, OR... TAKE SOMEONE HOSTAGE?

SOME PHENOMENON IS HINDERING MY MOVEMENT.
VII
VII (VRREEE)
VII
OR THE HARUHI SUZUMIYA PRESENT IN THIS SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM ...
...IS COUNTERING ME THREE LEVELS DEEP.
VU
VU
VU
VII
ALSO.
BI (BEEEP)
I CANNOT ESCAPE FROM THIS CLOSED SPACE.
BI
COMPLYING WITH YOUR DIRECTIVE CODE IS DIFFICULT.

DAMN YOU! WE COME ALL THIS WAY, AND YOU EXPECT ME TO BE SATISFIED WITH THAT?
I SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT.
GUGUGU (HRRRGH)
...BUT I CAN SUMMON THE SUBJECT.
LIKE THIS—!
BA (WHAP)
VUN (VRRMM)

HARUHI!
THERE WAS NO RESPONSE.
IS SHE REALLY ASLEEP, OR IS SHE BEING KEPT UNCON-SCIOUS?
SHE LOOKS LIKE A BROKEN DOLL!

I HAVE FORCIBLY TRANSPORTED HARUHI SUZUMIYA FROM OUTSIDE THE CLOSED SPACE.
SHE IS RECOGNIZED BY ALL PRESENT AS HARUHI SUZUMIYA.
I HAVE FULFILLED MY OBLIGATION.
NOT YET!
MY REQUIREMENT WAS THE DEATH OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA!
I NEVER ORDERED YOU TO BRING HER HERE ALIVE!
IMPLEMENTATION FORTHCOMING.
GIVEN A FALL FROM THIS ALTITUDE...
I SEE.
THAT'S A ROUNDABOUT WAY OF DOING IT. BUT IF THAT'S HOW THE HEAVENLY CANOPY DOMAIN THINKS, I'LL RESPECT IT.

SO WHAT WILL YOU DO?
THIS IS HOW IT IS, YOU PATHETIC THROW-BACK.
KILLING THIS GIRL WILL BE TRIVIAL.
WILL YOU LET HARUHI SUZUMIYA'S LIFE END HERE?
OR WILL YOU MAKE SASAKI THE NEW GOD?

STOP!
THIS IS MEANING-LESS!
IS IT CATASTROPHE YOU WANT?
BY THE LAWS OF TIME TRAVEL, THIS WOULD BE THE WORST CRIME IMAGINABLE!
I DON'T WANT THIS.
BUT I WISH FOR A NEW TIME MORE THAN THE EXISTENCE OF MY TIMELINE.
EVEN IF IT MEANS I DISAPPEAR, I'LL BET ON THAT.
I'LL MAKE SURE YOU REMAIN, SIS.
KUYOH!
CONSTRUCT A SYMBOL...
...THAT'S EASIER FOR THESE DENSE ON-LOOKERS TO UNDER-STAND.

TSU (GRIP)
SO, HOW DO YOU LIKE HAVING THE MOST PRECIOUS PERSON IN YOUR LIFE BEING USED AS A PAWN?
GIIII (CREEEAAAK)
THAT BASTARD ...!
WHAT KIND OF A FARCE IS THIS!?

HGH...!
THIS CONTAINER NO LONGER HAS ANY MEANING!
ONCE WE TRANSFER HER POWER INTO ANOTHER VESSEL...

(GA (CLENCH)
STAY CALM, KYON-KUN.
THERE'S NO PROOF THAT THAT'S THE REAL HARUHI SUZUMIYA.
IT COULD BE AN ILLUSION ...
NO.
...TO FORCE YOU INTO TAKING ACTION.
I'M AFRAID NOT.
EVEN IF OTHERS WERE DECEIVED, I CANNOT BE.
SINCE I AM A TOOL OF SUZUMIYA-SAN'S SUBCONSCIOUS.
WE ARE NOT LOOKING AT AN ILLUSION OR A CLONE.
THAT IS NONE OTHER THAN OUR BELOVED BRIGADE CHIEF!

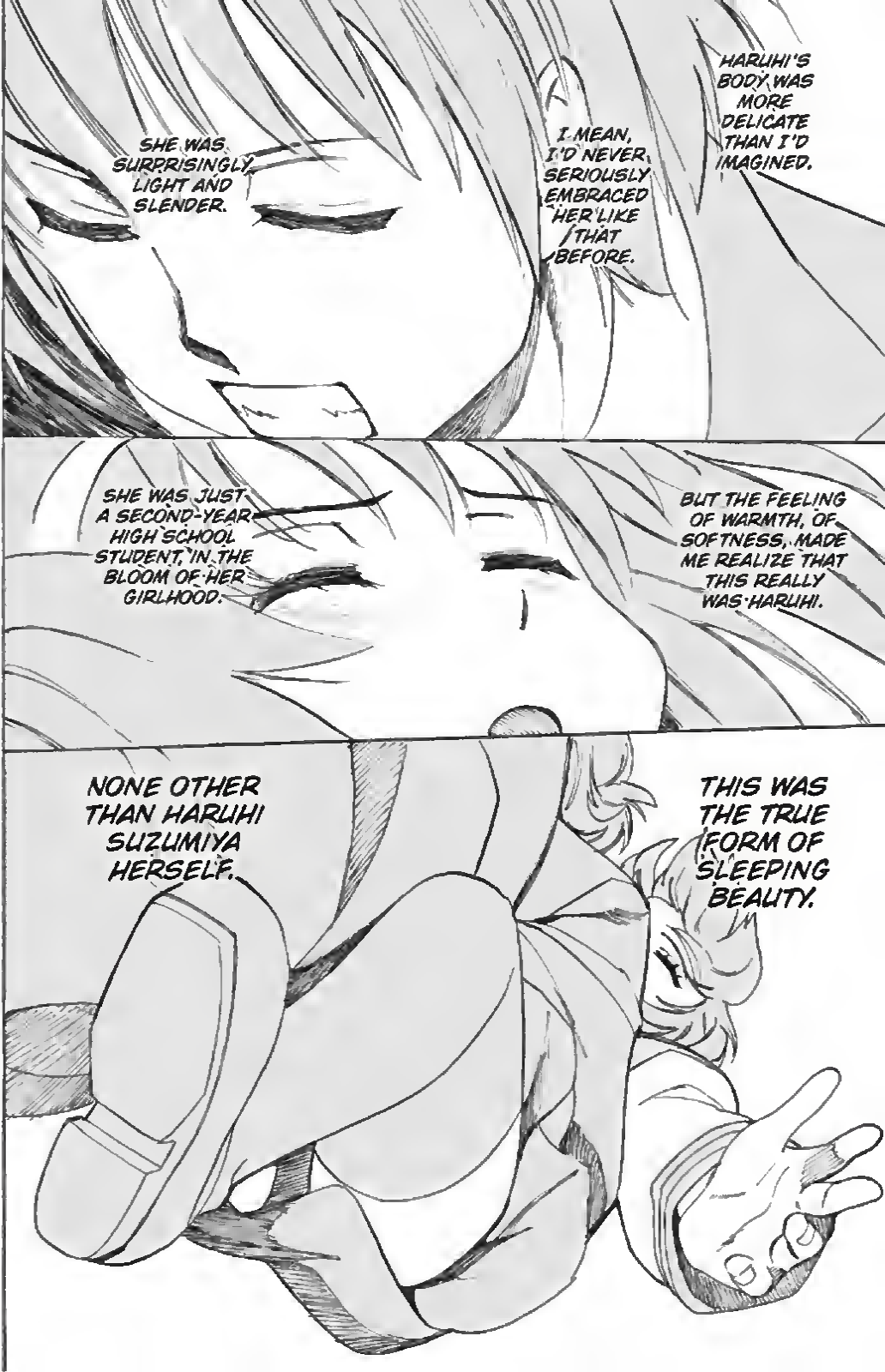
LOOKS LIKE THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE ANY NEGO-TIATING.
I'M GOING TO END SUZUMIYA'S LIFE.
DON'T WORRY.
SASAKI WILL HANDLE HER REMAINING DUTIES. THAT'S THE BEST OPTION.
IS THAT TRUE?
IS THAT THE RIGHT THING TO DO!?
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN DO IT, BY ALL MEANS PLEASE TRY.
DO YOU HAVE SOME KIND OF PLAN...?
KOIZUMI !?

OF COURSE, I DON'T HAVE ANY IDEAS ABOUT OUR CAPTURED PRINCESS UP THERE.
AM I WRONG?
IT'S ALWAYS THE PRINCE'S ROLE TO SAVE THE PRINCESS WHEN SHE'S IMPRISONED IN THORNS.
NOT JUST HIS ROLE— HIS DUTY.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT.
GUGU (CLENCH)
BUT I STILL HAVE IMPORTANT FACE-PUNCHING BUSINESS WITH FUJIWARA.
YOU'RE NOT.
I FEEL AS THOUGH I'VE BECOME THE PROTAGONIST OF AN ESPER MANGA.

I MAY NOT HAVE THIS CHANCE AGAIN, SO I HOPE YOU'LL LET ME SEIZE THIS ONE.
THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE TO MAKE MY DREAM COME TRUE, YOU SEE.
KOAAAA (VVOOOOO)
HIS VOICE IS STILL PLEASANT ...
...BUT HE'S SERIOUSLY PISSED.
GO RIGHT AHEAD.
YOU'VE GOTTA GET YOUR EXERCISE IF YOU WANT TO STAY SHARP.
TA (DASH)
WHA—!

KUYOH!
DO IT!
BABAN
HARUHI—!

I WASN'T THINKING ABOUT ANYTHING.
NOT ABOUT CONSEQUENCES, MEMORIES, OR MY SENSE OF DUTY.
LIKE I EXPECTED WINGS TO SPROUT FROM MY BACK.
I JUST JUMPED OUT INTO THIN AIR.
I GRABBED HER.
AND PULLED BY GRAVITY, WE BEGAN TO FALL.
HEAD-FIRST.
BOTH OF US.


SHE WAS SURPRISINGLY LIGHT AND SLENDER.
I MEAN, I'D NEVER SERIOUSLY EMBRACED HER LIKE THAT BEFORE.
HARUHI'S BODY WAS MORE DELICATE THAN I'D IMAGINED.
SHE WAS JUST A SECOND-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, IN THE BLOOM OF HER GIRLHOOD.
BUT THE FEELING OF WARMTH, OF SOFTNESS, MADE ME REALIZE THAT THIS REALLY WAS HARUHI.
NONE OTHER THAN HARUHI SUZUMIYA HERSELF.
THIS WAS THE TRUE FORM OF SLEEPING BEAUTY.

THERE WAS NOTHING ELSE IN MY EYES.
KOIZUMI, ASAHINA THE ELDER...
I'M SORRY.
COULD YOU SEE THE FUTURE YOU WANTED TO BRING ABOUT?
ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE PERSON RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.
HE'D BEEN SERIOUS.
FUJIWARA... YOU WERE REALLY WILLING TO GO THAT FAR?
TIGHTER AND MORE STRONGLY THAN I EVER HAD.
I CLOSED MY EYES AND EMBRACED HER.
HARUHI SUZUMIYA.

THE SURPRISE OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA XII : END

The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya